1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

465 small-scale industry, in the transportation and construction industries, and in trade was as follows:

| Year | Millions of kroons |
|---|---|
| 1927 | 36.2 |
| 1930 | 41.6 |
| 1935 | 43.7 |
| 1939 | 76.0 |

The average hourly wage of an industrial worker (men and women) was as follows:

| Year | Estonian cents |
|---|---|
| 1923 | 28.6 |
| 1927 | 29.3 |
| 1930 | 32.4 |
| 1935 | 30.2 |
| 1939 | 39.8 |

465 511 During the same period, 1929-39, the cost of living index rose less than the wages, as

465 illustrated by the following table:
511

Table 7. Cost of Living Index and Real Wages.

| Year | Cost of Living Index | Real wages (in cents) earned for one hour's work |
|---|---|---|
| 1923 | 95.0 | 95.9 |
| 1927 | 97.8 | 96.4 |
| 1930 | 96.5 | 108.1 |
| 1935 | 82.3 | 118.2 |
| 1939 | 104.2 | 123.0 |

465 Salaries of white-collar workers varied. Low salaries were earned by clerical workers (about 80 kroons monthly), and beginning elementary school teachers (about 100 kroons monthly for 12 months). Gymnasium teachers received higher salaries, about 180-220 kroons monthly for 12 months. University professor's salaries averaged 350 kroons a month all year.

464 There are no statistics for the Estonian SSR. Deportations have drastically decreased the

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Annex "A," Subparagraph 1q,

Sociological Background

PUBLIC WELFARE

511 During the years of independence a remarkable improvement occurred in the diet, clothing and housing of the population of Estonia.

434 Diet. For several years after World War I the average worker had to spend as much as 60 per cent of his income for food. The budget examination in 1937-38 revealed that factory workers, on an average, spent 41.8 per cent and agricultural workers 52.4 per cent of their income on food. At the same time, however, the diet had 262 improved considerably. The average member of an Estonian working class family consumed daily:

| | grams |
|---|---|
| bread, flour products, grits . . . . . | 481 |

262 rye bread and sweet-sour rye bread; cold meat jelly (sült) cooked with pigs' feet, head, and veal, and spiced with pepper, onion, bay leaves, and carrots; blood sausage (verivorst) made of grits and blood savored with special spices; sauerkraut with pork; cranberry "kissell"; and a special platter cake made with a topping of cottage cheese and eggs, either sweet or salty (korp).

511 During the war and occupation periods the Estonian food supply was extremely inadequate, especially in the cities. The rations given to the civilians by the Nazis were so small that, according to Estonian doctors' estimates, an active person could live on them only eight months without becoming seriously ill. It is therefore not surprising that the black market was extensively used. Since World War II,

[437]

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[544] food has been scarce in Estonia because many of the cattle were slaughtered during the course of the war and the collectivization of agriculture has probably brought productivity down. Today there is a special scarcity of meat, butter, milk, and bread, to name only the more important items.

Clothing was completely adequate during the independence period and Estonia belonged among [545] the well-dressed nations. Due to the lack of class distinctions, there were no striking contrasts in clothing. At the eve of the last World War the people were, on the whole, so well equipped with clothing that they managed to remain throughout the war decently dressed even though at that time clothing was not to be bought. The postwar period has been worse,

511 of course. There is a constant shortage of consumer goods and, even if they are available, the average person cannot afford them. Manufactured goods are mostly sent to Russia. Nevertheless, recent refugees from the Estonian SSR have told that people from Russia proper like to come to Estonia and the other Baltic states because the standard of living there, despite the war devastation, is still higher than in those parts of the U. S. S. R. which have been under Soviet rule since 1918. Furthermore, the Estonians seem to be especially skilled at remaking clothing from used material or from the new material they occasionally are able to get hold of.

292 National costumes, different in pattern according to counties, are still occasionally worn in Estonia. Men's national costumes are very rare and are worn only at performances of

464 during the depression this number rose to about
[745] 8000. Emergency relief work was organized by the local governments every winter. In the summertime Estonia was in great need of workers for farming and mining, so much so that workers were even imported from Poland for this purpose.

746 In summary, social conditions in Estonia at the end of independence were quite satisfactory and constant improvement was being made. The public conscience was alert to the problems of poverty, disease and unemployment. Each winter public enterprises (balls, concerts, etc.) were arranged, the income of which was given entirely to the needy unemployed. The churches, too, did work in helping the poor and sick.

511 The last World War, and especially the Soviet occupations, have drastically lowered the

511 standard of living. There are today insufficient food rations again and the people have to spend their small incomes for buying high-priced black market goods. Although clothing is not rationed, it is extremely scarce and very expensive.

466 Working conditions in Estonia today are the same as elsewhere in the Soviet Union. The Labor Law does not protect the worker and the workers are, as a result, being considerably exploited. The work days are longer and there are many kinds of "voluntary" work to be performed after the day's work. The women and the youth are not protected by law from heavy and dangerous work. (For more details see Subparagraph 1m, LABOR FORCE)[1]

[1] [See cat. 116, pp 256-274 -- Analyst]

474 officials with their own men and put the co-op-
441 eratives under the dual control of the People's Commissariat for Trade and "Tsentrosoiuz," the Moscow co-operative headquarters. As a result, with orders coming from both quarters, there was much confusion. The co-operative movement was very popular in independent Estonia; there were 208 societies with 600 shops, handling over one-fourth of the retail and about one-half of the export trade, with a monopoly of butter, eggs and bacon. Under the Communist rule workshops and restaurants were all incorporated in the co-operatives. Prior to kolkhozation the trading operations of the farmers were also controlled by Communist co-operatives.

● [51] Due to the shortage of consumer goods the co-operatives are not able to supply the people with the articles they are entitled to buy.

511 Way of life. According To all descriptions of the living conditions of the Vepsians at the end of the czarist rule and the beginning of the Bolshevik reign, their life seems to be quite primitive. Kettunen, upon his first arrival at Vepse in 1917, was overcome by the charm of this primitiveness (p. 41): "I at once felt as though I had arrived at the primitive Balto-Finnic imaginary land, where I had sometimes [493] wished to be, at least for a while." There are villages to which one cannot go by carriage in summer, but only on foot; for carrying loads a 511 kind of sleigh (purilazh) is used. Quite a num- 342 ber of houses are without chimneys, so that the smoke can only escape by the doors and windows. Some of the huts are not even rain-proof; Kettunen tells that in a Vepsian house in Pjatina (Russian: Pyatino) they all were bothered by rain at night. There are no beds in the houses, and the people sleep on benches attached to the walls, or on the oven, or even on the floor. During the cold winters the Vepsians, following the Russian model, used to bring young animals into the room. Kettunen sometimes had to share his working room not only with other people but also with calves and poultry.

[343] The bathhouse is rather a rarity in 515 Vepse. Instead, the people used to bathe in the oven of the dwelling house. When the oven is heated, and some straw spread on its floor, one member of the family carefully crawls into it, feet first, so as not to touch the hot mouth of the oven. The oven is spacious enough for one person to sit. After he is in, he closes

2: Anonymous G-4,5 (no date) 1939 RB1 Baltic Countries
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TABLE 3.—*Monthly Wages of Agricultural Laborers and Cost-of-Living Indexes in Estonia, 1933 to 1937*

| Year | Monthly wage (in kroons) of laborers on— | | | | | | General cost-of-living index (1913–100) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yearly contract | | Summer contract | | Day work | | |
| | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | |
| 1933 | 14.4 | 10.7 | 19.5 | 14.7 | 29.0 | 22.8 | 88 |
| 1934 | 16.7 | 11.8 | 22.7 | 16.6 | 33.3 | 26.4 | 87 |
| 1935 | 18.7 | 13.1 | 26.2 | 18.4 | 38.4 | 31.2 | 88 |
| 1936 | 22.1 | 16.0 | 30.9 | 22.3 | 43.6 | 35.8 | 96 |
| 1937 | 27.2 | 19.5 | 38.1 | 27.1 | 55.0 | 43.2 | 104 |

## INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

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There were partial increases in wage rates in Estonia in 1937, particularly in seasonal industries, such as the building trades and others. In table 4 average hourly wages and hours of labor per day are presented, according to size of establishment and by sex, for 1936 and 1937.

TABLE 4.—*Average Hourly Wages and Average Hours Per Day of Industrial Workers in Estonia, 1936 and 1937*

[Average exchange rate of Estonian sent in 1937—about 0.27 cent, U. S. currency]

| Industrial enterprises employing— | Average hourly wages | | | | Average hours of labor per day | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1936 | | 1937 | | First half of— | | | | Second half of— | | | |
| | | | | | 1936 | | 1937 | | 1936 | | 1937 | |
| | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| | *Sentl* | *Sentl* | *Sentl* | *Sentl* | | | | | | | | |
| 50 or more workers | 37.4 | 24.3 | 40.5 | 25.8 | 8.06 | 7.91 | 8.11 | 7.79 | 8.12 | 7.84 | 8.14 | 7.85 |
| 20 to 49 workers | 34.9 | 21.3 | 37.6 | 23.5 | 8.10 | 7.73 | 8.08 | 7.91 | 8.05 | 7.99 | 8.22 | 7.87 |
| 5 to 19 workers | 30.9 | 19.5 | 33.0 | 20.8 | 7.91 | 7.76 | 7.91 | 7.85 | 7.96 | 7.70 | 7.95 | 7.70 |
| Less than 5 workers | 24.1 | 14.7 | 25.3 | 15.6 | | | | | | | | |

Average hourly wage rates of industrial workers in Estonia are presented in table 5, for the second half of 1937, according to size of establishment and by sex and industry.